

Message Text

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SUBJECT: TURKISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP, MAY 5-11

REF: (A) ANKARA 3411 (DTG 050515Z MAY 77), (B) ANKARA 3486
(DTG 061330Z MAY 77), (C) ANKARA 3538 (DTG 091400Z MAY 77)

1. SUMMARY: THE TURKISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONTINUED WITH
NOTABLY LESS VIOLENCE MAY 5-11 AS REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S
PARTY (RPP) LEADER ECEVIT AND NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY
(NSP) LEADER ERBAKAN CAMPAIGN IN WESTERN TURKEY WHILE
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PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL DREW HEADLINES FROM HIS LONDON MEETING
WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. MOST NOTEWORTHY EVENT OF THE PERIOD
WAS ECEVIT'S NEARLY CATEGORIC STATEMENT MAY 7 THAT THE
RPP COULD NEVER JOIN A COALITION WITH DEMIREL'S JUSTICE
PARTY (JP). THE NSP SHOWED FRESH EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS
FACTIONALISM AND NSP CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN PLEDGED TO EXPAND OPIUM
POPPY CULTIVATION. THE PROCESS OF CANDIDATE SELECTION WAS

ESSENTIALLY COMPLETED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE POLITICAL PARTIES' "FINAL" CANDIDATE LISTS, WHICH WERE SUBMITTED MAY 5 AND CAN BE CHANGED THROUGH MAY 12, SHOWED THAT THE RPP, THE JP AND THE NSP WOULD FIELD CANDIDATES IN ALL 67 PROVINCES OF TURKEY, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) AND NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) IN 66, THE REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY (RRL) IN 64, THE TURKISH UNITY PARTY (TUP) IN 20, AND THE TURKISH LABOR PARTY (TLP) IN 15. THE RPP, JP, NSP, AND NAP WILL COMPETE IN SENATE ELECTIONS IN ALL 22 CONCERNED PROVINCES, THE DP AND RR WILL COMPETE IN 21 AND THE TUP AND TLP WILL NOT TAKE PART IN THE SENATE ELECTIONS.

3. NSP CAMPAIGN.

A. ALTHOUGH RPP AND JP HEADQUARTERS' "CONTINGENCY" NOMINATIONS STIRRED SOME REACTION, THE MOST SPECTACULAR POST-NOMINATION BACKLASH OCCURRED IN THE NSP, WHERE A PORTION OF THE LONG-ALIENATED NURCU WING FINALLY MADE A FORMAL BREAK WITH THE NSP AND BELTAEDLY JOINED THE ORDER PARTY (NIZAM PARTISI). FOUR DEPUTIES (RESAT SARUHAN, AHMET AKCAEL, HUSAMETTIN AKMUMCU, VAHDETTIN KARACORLU) RESIGNED FROM THE NSP MAY 9 AND 10 AND JOINED THE OP, WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SET UP BY NSP DISSIDENTS BUT HAD NOT ATTRACTED ANY HIGH-LEVEL DEFECTORS BEFORE. THE DISSIDENTS CITED NSP CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN'S "ABSOLUTIST RULE OF THE PARTY" AND THE FAILURE OF HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, EX-MININT ASILTURK, TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH STUDENT VIOLENCE. (IT IS TOO LATE FOR THE NEW PARTY TO QUALIFY TO FIELD CANDIDATES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AKMUMCU, ALREADY REGISTERED AS AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE.)

B. DESPITE THE SIGNS OF DISORDER WITHIN HIS PARTY (OR PERHAPS TO DRAW ATTENTION AWAY FROM THEM), NSP CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN CONTINUED TO SOUND A NOTE OF ULTRA-OPTIMISM AS HE CONTINUED HIS CAMPAIGN WITH A SWING THROUGH THE OPIUM-GROWING PROVINCES OF AFYON, USAK, AND DENIZLI. DELCARING THAT THE JP WOULD GET ONLY 110 SEATS AND THAT THE RPP'S TALK OF COMING TO POWER ALONE WAS EMPTY, ERBAKAN CONTINUED TO CLAIM THAT THE NSP WOULD COME TO POWER WITH 250 SEATS. MAIN THEME OF HIS SPEECHES WAS STRIDENT NATIONALISM, WITH EQUAL SCORN APPLIED TO BOTH THE RPP AND THE NSP'S COALITION PARTNER, THE JP, FOR RACING WITH EACH OTHER "TO LOOK GOOD TO AND SERVE THE U.S." ERBAKAN PORTRAYED HIS PARTY AS THE ONLY ONE WHICH HAD RESISTED FOREIGN PRESSURE AGAINST THE GROWING OF OPIUM POPPIES AND WHICH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REPEAL OF THE POPPY BAN, AND HE PROMISED THAT "WHEN WE, GOD WILLING, FORM THE GOVERNMENT AS THE NSP...WE WLL EXPAND POPPY PLANTATION TO AMASYA AND MALATYA AS WELL."

4. RPP CAMPGAIGN.

A. IN A SWING THROUGH ISPARTA, MALATYA AND IZMIR, RPP LEADER ECEVIT CONTINUED TO DRAW IMPRESSIVE CROWDS. PERHAPS DUE TO GREATLY INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES, THERE WAS NO MAJOR VIOLENCE DURING THE TOUR. IN A NOTEWORTHY SPEECH IN IZMIR MAY 7, ECEVIT DENOUNCED THE FREQUENTLY-RAISED IDEA OF AN RPP-JP COALITION IN THE EVENT THAT THE ELECTIONS FAIL TO PRODUCE A MAJORITY FOR ONE PARTY. "I ANNOUNCE THIS WITH ALL OPENNESS AND DEFINITIVENESS TO EVERYONE AND TO THE WHOLE WORLD THAT IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE SUCH AN IDEA WILL NOT BECOME REALITY," ECEVIT DECLARED, ADDING THAT FOR THE RPP TO ENTER INTO SUCH A COALITION WOULD BE "TO BETRAY OURSELVES, THE PEOPLE, DEMOCRACY AND THE STATE."

B. ECEVIT ALSO CAPTURED HEADLINES WITH TWO SETS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOREIGN POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS. A MAY 5 PRESS RELEASE (REF B), THE BURDEN OF WHICH WAS THAT THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN WOULD NOT HARM TURKISH-U.S. RELATIONS, WAS PLAYED BY MUCH OF PRESS AS A WARNING TO THE U.S. AGAINST INTERFERENCE IN THE ELECTION. IN REMARKS TO FOREIGN JOURNALISTS (REF C), ECEVIT CALLED FOR A "SELF-SUFFICIENT SECURITY CONCEPT" WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE "EXCESSIVE RELIANCE" ON THE U.S. AND NATO; CALLED FOR GREATER EMPHASIS IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY ON RELATIONS WITH EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, MIDDLE EASTERN, AND BALKAN COUNTRIES; AND SAID HE WOULD GIVE PRIORITY TO REESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS WITH GREECE. WITH REGARD TO THE AEGEAN DISPUTE, HE DECLARED THAT "THE BASIS PRINCIPLE IS THAT THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF IS ATTACHED TO BOTH COUNTRIES. JUST AS THE DIVISION SHOULD NOT AFFECT THE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS, THE ISLANDS SHOULD NOT AFFECT THE DIVISION."

5. JP CAMPAIGN.

A. PRIMIN DEMIREL CAPTURED HEADLINES WITH HIS TRIP TO LONDON FOR THE NATO SUMMIT AND A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. (DEMIREL REPORTEDLY SAID WHILE EN ROUTE "I SPEAK EITHER IN YOZGAT OR IN LONDON. WOULD IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?") THE LONDON MEETING APPEARS SO FAR TO HAVE BEEN A PLUS FOR DEMIREL, WHOSE FORMAL CAMPAIGN IN TURKEY IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MAY 14 AND TAKE HIM THROUGH 42 PROVINCES.

B. ADANA JP PRESIDENT SEPICI INFORMED THE PRESS MAY 9 THAT THE JP WOULD, IF NECESSARY, COOPERATE WITH THE NAP AND ITS YOUTH BRANCH (OFTEN CALLED "COMMANDOS") TO ENSURE SECURITY AT THE POLLS, "OPPOSING FORCE WITH FORCE."

6. THE LEFTIST PRESS CONTINUED TO RUN ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES ALLEGING CIA RESPONSIBILITY (OR A LESS SPECIFIC "IMPERALIST PLOT") FOR THE MAY 1 BLOODSHED IN ISTANBUL; HOWEVER, NONE OF THE MAJOR CANDIDATES USED THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEME WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ERBAKAN, WHO MADE CHARGES OF "A FOREIGN FINGER" IN THE MAY 1 EVENT. THERE WERE ALSO A FEW COMMENTARIES IN MINOR PAPERS ON WHETHER OR NOT THE U.S. THROUGH ITS SUPPORT FOR INCREASED ARMS AID TO TURKEY, WAS SHOWING ITS PREFERENCE FOR DEMIREL AND ATTEMPTING TO AID HIM.

7. CONSULATES GENERAL ISTANBUL AND IZMIR AND CONSULATE ADANA HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT.
MACOMBER

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